

Most Lipteninae stay at the tree of their birth; in Nigeria I found a very rare species on the same tree where I last saw it ten years earlier. *Eresiomera cornesi* Stempffer was collected on four or five occasions on a single tree in the Gambari Forest near Ibadan in Nigeria during the 1960s; the tree was cut down and the species has not been seen since 1969. However, despite their sedentary behaviour, they must have some mobility. Many rare and highly localised species are found all the way from Sierra Leone to Uganda and Kenya with identical genitalia. This might change in the future. Deforestation in most of Africa is progressing at a deplorable rate; there is probably only 15% of the original forest left in West Africa (much of it degraded), and it is becoming so fragmented that gene-flow is cut off. We may see isolated populations beginning to diverge and speciate, an important issue for future study, and an important reason for building up reference collections today.

But to return to *Ornipholidotos larseni*. Michel Libert, in France, studying his material from Cameroon, realised that the genus needed to be split in two, based on some rather esoteric, but deeply significant, differences in the front legs. He asked for my agreement to call the new genus *Torbenia*, to which I acceded, not being troubled by false modesty. It was then found that *O. larseni* belonged in the new genus. So I now have what must be the most immodest butterfly in the world: *Torbenia larseni*!— TORBEN B. LARSEN, Bangladesh, World Bank, 1818 H Street N.W., Washington D.C., 20433, USA. (E-mail: Torbenlarsen@compuserve.com)

### ***Sorhagenia janiszewskae* Riedl (Lep.: Cosmopterigidae) feeding on *Rhamnus cathartica* and new to Lancashire**

During 1999, on a visit to Gait Barrows National Nature Reserve in north Lancashire (VC 60: grid reference SD 4777), SP came across distinctive signs of larval feeding in the new growth of twigs on a large Buckthorn *Rhamnus cathartica*. The leaf growth was withered on the tips of several twigs and was reminiscent of damage done to an Alder Buckthorn *Frangula alnus*, shown to SP by Maitland Emmet and JRL on a visit to a site in Surrey several years previously. The genus involved was likely to be *Sorhagenia*, but which of the three possible species was responsible was not clear. Only one of the twigs was removed, as SP considered himself unlikely to be successful in breeding the moth through, and this proved correct.

RMP and JRL had subsequently visited Gait Barrows on the 21 June 2000 and had found wilted tips on a different Buckthorn tree some distance from the first. Furthermore, on the following day, larval signs had been found on *Frangula alnus* at a site some miles away, at Roudsea Wood National Nature Reserve (VC 69: SD 3382). With these possible larval sightings in mind, during a subsequent visit to the Gait Barrows site by SP and RMP, on 27 July 2000, we visited the original tree and idly tapped it to see if any moths appeared. To our delight, and astonishment, two small moths immediately

detached themselves from the leaves and were easily netted. Initial observation with a hand lens indicated that they could well be a *Sorhagenia* species.

The problem now was to ascertain the species involved. The feeding method and the time of year that the larvae had been observed indicated that *Sorhagenia janiszewskae* Riedl was the most likely candidate. However, a check in Emmet (1988. *A Field Guide to the Smaller British Lepidoptera*), gave *Frangula* as the only listed foodplant, although *Rhamnus* is given as an occasional additional foodplant in *The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland* Vol. 4 (in preparation). At the request of JRL, RMP prepared a genitalia slide which was subsequently checked by John and found to be a female *Sorhagenia janiszewskae*.

Data maps initially produced by Maitland Emmet and now held and recently updated by JRL showed this to be a species of southern English counties with the most northerly records known, prior to our findings, being from Berkshire and South Essex. Our data suggest a considerable extension of the range of this species in Britain, and indicate that it would be well worth searching for in suitable parts of the Midlands and southern parts of north-west England.

We would like to thank English Nature, specifically Rob Petley-Jones, for permission to study Lepidoptera on the Gait Barrows and Roudsea Wood reserves.— STEPHEN PALMER, 137 Lightfoot Lane, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR4 0AH (E-mail: Palmer01@genie.co.uk), ROBERT M. PALMER, Greenburn Cottage, Bucksburn, Aberdeen AB21 9UA (E-mail: bob@bobpalmer.freeserve.co.uk) and JOHN R. LANGMAID, Wilverley, 1 Dorrita Close, Southsea, Hampshire PO4 0NY (E-mail: john@langmaidj.freeserve.co.uk).

### **A further late record of the Mother of Pearl *Pleuroptya ruralis* (Scop.) (Lep.: Pyralidae)**

We read with interest the note in the last issue of this journal (*antea*: 2), by Tony Steel concerning a late record of the Mother of Pearl *Pleuroptya ruralis* caught on 21 October 2000 in Kent. This brought to mind a similar sighting by us last year. From 30 September until 7 October, we stayed on the Lizard Peninsula in Cornwall at Higher Predannack above Mullion Cove. The week saw many good migrants gracing our traps including large numbers of White-speck *Mythimna unipuncta*, Delicate *Mythimna vitellina* and a single *Palpita unionalis*. On the morning of the 5 October we were very surprised to find a pristine Mother of Pearl *Pleuroptya ruralis* in our traps. Given the number of migrants recorded during the week it seems likely that the individual concerned was a migrant moth. — JON CLIFTON, Kestrel Cottage, Station Road, Hindolveston, Norfolk NR20 5DE (E-mail: jon.clifton@btinternet.com) and ADRIAN WANDER, 54A Hartford Road, Davenham, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 8JF.